



# PARENT HELPERS ON CAMP

## POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

At Poowong Consolidated School we believe in promoting a positive camping program, based on positive behaviours and values, that seeks to increase student relationships, wellbeing and learning. We understand that on camp, student wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and that social and emotional wellbeing underpin effective student learning and positive behaviour. Our camping program provides positive opportunities for students to experience independence, resilience and a range of team building activities. Poowong is an engaging and inclusive school where respect and resilience are core values of the school's philosophy (Poowong Consolidated School Student Engagement Policy). Poowong Consolidated School actively promotes and nurtures a partnership approach to education with parents and thus encourages parents to attend camp. It acknowledges the role parents/ carers play in their children's learning and the contributions they make to the school.

### PURPOSE

The Parent Helpers on Camp Policy assists helpers on school camp with protocols and procedures for appropriate conduct and the development of positive relationships within the camp context.

We expect that Poowong Consolidated School parents will demonstrate the school values at all times whilst on camp, and expect this of the children that they are supporting within this activity also.

**Our school values are:** Striving for Personal Best, Excellence in Learning, Respect for Self and Others, Independence, Resilience and Sense of Community.

### POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Parents will be invited to assist in the supervision of school camps. When deciding which parents will attend, the teacher in charge will take into account –

- Any valuable skills the parents have to offer. e.g. bus licence, first aid
- The preference to include both male and female parents.
- The special needs of particular students.

Parents selected to assist with the camps program will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check and up to date Police Check. The school will pay for any associated costs. Parent volunteers may be required to pay the accommodation and meals cost of the camp.

While school camps are a team activity requiring the cooperation and common-sense of all participants, it is the teacher in charge who oversees the operations of the camp, takes charge of events, makes key decisions and accepts ultimate responsibility for the camp.

### CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY WHILST ON CAMP

Due to the privacy of all children, we ask parents on camp to ensure that photos they take of children, including their own whilst on camp, NOT to be posted on social media. The only photos that will be posted on the school Facebook page will be done by the teachers or the Principal to ensure that all students uploaded have the appropriate permissions for this to be done. Photos may not be emailed, texted or used in any way or distributed in any way before, during or after the camp, even at the encouragement or request of other parents.

Issues arising from student misbehaviour or disclosures from children MUST be immediately referred to the teachers at camp. Issues, discipline procedures etc will be managed by the teacher, not by parent helpers. Issues, behaviour concerns or disclosures of ANY kind may not be talked about with anyone outside the camp context, before, during or after the camp. This protects student privacy and confidentiality.

Phone calls to other student's parents, text messages about students on camp MUST NOT occur for privacy reasons. Even in the event of parents making contact with you whilst on camp, communication regarding students must be referred to the teacher in charge to respond to. Communication regarding medical issues, birthdays or urgent events will be conducted by the teachers on camp. No messages from other parents should be passed on to students without the approval of the teacher in charge.

We ask that phone calls, text messages and use of Facebook and other online content by helpers on camp be kept to a minimum and that active supervision of students be maintained at all times.

Personal privacy of all parties, whilst on camp, is paramount. Entering student, teacher or camp helper sleeping dorms should be preceded by a knock to ensure the privacy of all parties. Entering student cabins should be a task for the teachers, unless for a specific and reasonable purpose. Assisting students with toileting, dressing, showering or any other activity that may present a privacy issue for any reason, should be referred to the teacher in charge in all instances.

Confidential information at our school may only be transferred from one person to another when it is professionally appropriate and legally acceptable to do so. Parent Helpers on camp are asked not to share information about students with others, regardless of the circumstances. As a school we base all decisions around privacy obligations as detailed in the *Information Privacy Act*.

Staff members will protect the privacy rights of children and their medical needs by ensuring that first aid and medication delivery is allocated to an appropriate staff member with First Aid training. Details of medical needs of students will only be shared with parent helpers on camp if applicable. Confidentiality around this must be maintained by all parties.

Staff members will not disclose confidential information about students, families or staff, or be drawn into discussions about students, families or staff, with any parent helpers on camp.

Breaches of confidentiality relating to students, families, complaints, staff selection or staff performance etc are all serious offences. The principal will thoroughly investigate any alleged breaches of confidentiality or privacy. Any substantiated breaches of confidentiality and privacy will be referred to the Department of Education's Legal branch.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents/carers are encouraged to understand the school's behavioural expectations, which aim to provide a consistent approach that support your child's learning and engagement in and out of school. This is assisted by home to school and school to home communication, so that we work in an effective partnership.

Staff have the right to conduct their work (including whilst on camps and excursions) in a supportive, non-threatening environment, free from harassment, threats and intimidation. Any actions that contradict these violate the Fair Work Act, and will not be accepted at Poowong Consolidated School.

Listed below are expectations pertaining to a positive partnership (also applicable to camps):

**Parents /Carers have the right to:**

Participate in school camps in a happy, safe, secure and satisfying environment

Be heard and treated with respect by all members of the school community at all times whilst on camp

Have access to staff to discuss concerns about student behaviour in group activities whilst on camp or to express general concerns to ensure follow-up

Report instances of concern/issues/incidents involving your child whilst on camp

Maintain personal privacy whilst on camp

Talk with students initially about small issues prior to referring them to a staff member

**Parents /Carers have the responsibility to:**

Support the school in its effort to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment whilst on camp

Act in a safe and responsible manner at all times on camp

Not consume alcohol during your time at camp

Not smoke during your time on camp (unless pre-arranged and conducted outside the camp boundaries)

Listen to, and treat members of the school community with respect at all times whilst on camp

Communicate and act on information regarding all children on camp

Support school policies and decision-making processes- particularly the Parent Code of Conduct, Privacy and Confidentiality Policies.

Allow procedures to be followed as stipulated in school policies by staff whilst on camp

Maintain a solution-focussed approach to solving issues in a calm and cooperative manner at all times

Whilst on camp, parent helpers will treat all staff, camp workers and other helpers with respect remembering your tone of voice and body language used when raising a concern

Use a "No Triangles" or "No Third Party" approach- if issues arise, this is taken up with the person concerned, not discussed via a third party or on a "Telephone Tree" as this continues issues, information becomes distorted and people are unable to move forward.

Show faith in the school's attempt at fair, consistent and reasonable actions and consequences, when dealing with issues that occur within the camp context.

## **PROTOCOL FOR ISSUE RESOLUTION WHILST ON CAMP**

All participants on camp have the right to feel safe and comfortable at school. There may be times when you feel that the action of another child or staff member has infringed the rights of a child or yourself.

Where there is an issue with a staff member, this should be discussed first with that staff member in a tone of courtesy and respect. If, after speaking to the teacher involved, you feel that an issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction whilst on camp, please call the school office to discuss the support needed with the Principal. The school number is 03 56592356. In emergency situations, please call Cate directly on 0417 117 076 (this is a personal direct number for Cate and should be discarded after camp and not shared with others).

All camp issues revolving around students are to be handled by the staff of the school. We attempt to resolve these through:

- Calm discussions between the parties directly involved whilst respecting the dignity of each and every person. This is done using a Restorative Practices approach.
- Being prepared to actively listen to another's point of view
- Allowing correct procedures to be followed to allow all parties to be heard

Approach situations with a spirit of cooperation, understanding and genuine partnership.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on

**August 2017**